

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

A Verse by Verse Study

by

Oliver B. Greene

Copyright © 1963

CHAPTER TWENTY

Satan Bound; etc.

In chapter 19 we saw the great white horse and his rider. In chapter 20 we will see the white Throne of judgment and justice. The great white charger sets forth victorious power in conquest and the final victory of the King of kings. The great white Throne denotes holiness, purity, justice and the final judgment of the wicked. The great white charger going forth to conquer precedes the great white Throne, and the victory of the rider prepares the way for judgment at the great white Throne.

In chapter 20 we will see four outstanding things:

1. The binding of Satan. He will be put in prison for one thousand years. We might say he will be placed in God's penitentiary (verses 1-3).
2. The reign of Christ and the saints for one thousand glorious years (verses 4-6).
3. We see Satan loosed for a little season to test those who will be born during the Millennium. He makes his last great drive to conquer the world and overthrow God. He comes to utter defeat and meets his eternal doom (verses 7-10).
4. In the last part of chapter 20 we see the judgment of the wicked dead. There are no righteous dead here - only the wicked dead. The righteous have already been judged for their stewardship, and have received their rewards at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

SATAN BOUND AND PLACED IN PRISON FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS

Revelation 20:1-3

1. **And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.**
2. **And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,**
3. **And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season.**

We need not speculate on the identity of the angel in our first verse, it is the angel of the Lord.

In Revelation 1:18 we read that Jesus has the keys of hell and death, and He would not trust those keys to anyone else. I believe He personally binds Satan and puts him into the bottomless pit, thus denoting by sealing the pit that the government of Almighty God is behind the prison term of Satan, and will see to it that he does not escape.

There could be no Millennium, no time of peace, as long as Satan is loose. We know that he is at present the god of this age. the prince of the power of the air, walking about as a roaring lion, and also disguised as a minister of righteousness and an angel of light. This is the day of Satan. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse. As it was in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, so shall it be before Jesus returns to this earth to reign. There can be no peace on earth and good will toward men until Satan is in the pit, securely locked away to deceive the nations no more.

In verse 2 the angel **“laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.”** In this verse Satan is called by four different names: The Dragon, the Serpent, the Devil, and Satan. These names are given here in the same order in which they are mentioned in Revelation 12:9.

- **“Dragon”** symbolizes cruelty.
- **“Serpent”** signifies guile and cunning treachery.
- **“Devil”** is the deceiver, the tempter of men.
- **“Satan”** means the opponent, the enemy of Christ and His people.

Certainly we learn from these names that Satan is a person, and not just an influence or principle of evil.

- Satan is the **prince of the power of the air** (Ephesians 2:2);
- He is **the god of this age** (II Corinthians 4:4)
- He is **the ruler of the powers of darkness** (Ephesians 6:11,12).

He can assume any form necessary to damn a soul.

His position is so exalted that Michael, the archangel, would not accuse him, but said, **“The Lord rebuke thee”** (Jude 9). If Michael dared not bring an accusation against Satan, what angel do you think would attempt to bind him? Only the omnipotent Lord Jesus could do that. It is He who holds the key to the bottomless pit. This is the same angel we read about in Revelation 9:1-2.

The binding of Satan reveals to us the fact that Almighty God can stop the devil at the appointed time. He can stop him without armies. When the time comes, God will send one angel to seize, handcuff and bind Satan and place him in chains in prison.

The term **“a thousand years”** is found six times in Revelation 20: Verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Three of these times pertain to Satan, two are connected with the reign of the saints with Jesus during the Millennium, and the last one pertains to the time between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked.

There is no such thing in the Word of God as a general resurrection. The dead in Christ will be raised first (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15). All six of the references above have to do with the same thousand years, but in different relationship.

This is not symbolic, but is literally one thousand years according to Bible years of twelve months. (A prophetic year is 360 days, not 365 days.)

According to Jewish belief and reasoning, the six thousand years now drawing to a close correspond to the six days in which God created the heavens and the earth. On the seventh day God rested from His labors. A day is as a thousand years with the Lord, and a thousand years as one day (II Peter 3:8). Therefore, by such reasoning, we have been on this earth about six days (almost six thousand years - 4,000 before Christ and almost 2,000 since). It must be about time for the Sabbath - the thousand years of peace. The Bible says, "There remaineth therefore a [Sabbath] rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). The people of God refers to all saints, but primarily to the elect of God, the nation Israel.

In the last part of verse 3 we read, "**After that he (Satan) must be loosed a little season.**" "After that" refers to more than the thousand years Satan will spend in prison. It means also after the destruction of Babylon; after the marriage of the Lamb; after the battle of Armageddon here on earth; after the destruction of the Beast, the false prophet and all who follow them; after the binding of Satan, sealing him for one thousand years.

After all these things, he must be turned loose for a little season. Someone may ask, "Why? After Satan is placed in prison, why would God release him?" Remember, Israel will be in her own land for one thousand years in natural bodies. She will build houses and inhabit them; she will plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. She will multiply by the millions.

Read and study all the verses in Isaiah chapters 65 and 66. At the end of the Millennium there will be millions on earth who have never been tempted. If God did not permit them to be tested as were Adam and Eve, and you and I, then God would be a respecter of persons - and we know He is not (Romans 2:11).

Therefore, all who are born during the Millennium must be tempted. Satan will be loosed for a little season, but the Word of God does not tell us how long the "**little season**" will be. To these people, Satan will offer the same things he offered Adam and Eve in the Garden, the same things he offered Jesus in Matthew 4 and Luke 4. In his last desperate attempt to overthrow God's throne and exalt himself above the stars of God (Isaiah 14) Satan will offer power and glory with himself to all who will follow him. Many (the number as the sands of the sea) will rally around Satan in his last great attempt to take the Holy City, to crush the saints and Israel in the earth that has been freed from the curse for one thousand years.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST DURING THE MILLENNIUM

Revelation 20:4-6:

4. **And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

5. **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.**

6. **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**

Who are they who will reign with Christ in heavenly glory here on earth for one thousand years? There is much speculation and much disagreement as to who these are. Some say they are saints; some say they are angels. We will come back to this subject a little later.

The sovereignty of Christ as MAN (Psalm 8) and as KING (Psalm 2) is Bible truth. A royal reign to be displayed for one thousand years here on this earth is unquestionable according to Scripture. The prophets of old saw it in a vision. Judah sang about it. The prophecy from Isaiah to Malachi speaks of its glory, blessing and splendor. The earth is to be delivered from the curse under which it has so long groaned and travailed.

God created Adam and gave the earth to him. Adam subleased it to the devil, and when the lease runs out the sub-lease is no good. One day Adam's day will be over and the day of the Lord God Almighty will come in. He will literally banish Satan from the earth: and the earth will be delivered from the curse. **"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever"** (Revelation 11:15).

In Revelation 11:15 the reign was announced. In chapter 20 it has actually come to pass. Verses 4 through 6 are extremely important and unique, for here, alone, is revealed a summary of those who will share with Christ in the Millennium, in the reign of righteousness and glory here on earth. **"I saw thrones"** - Daniel in exile and John the Beloved in exile saw thrones in a vision . . . the same thrones. When Daniel saw them they were unoccupied; John saw them occupied: **"They sat upon them."**

In Daniel 7:9 we read, **"Till the thrones were cast down."** We might paraphrase it thusly: "Till the thrones were placed." Daniel beheld until the thrones were established. He does not lead us into the Millennium, but simply to the beginning of it. He breaks off his prophecy at the beginning of the Millennium where one **"like unto the Son of man"** receives from the Ancient of Days the universal and everlasting kingdom (Daniel 7:13,14).

The thrones seen here are not to be confused with the twenty-four thrones of Revelation 4:4. The thrones Daniel saw (Daniel 7:9) and the thrones John sees in Revelation 20:4 both point to the Millennial government here on earth.

In verse 4 we read, “. . . **and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.**”

The question now arises, “To whom do the pronouns they and them refer?” The Scriptures do not teach that angels or heavenly creatures will reign here on earth: **“For unto the angels hath He NOT put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak”** (Hebrews 2:5). The government of earth during the Millennium is to be administered by Christ and His heavenly saints (I Corinthians 6:2,3). “THEY” refers to the Church, the Bride of Christ - “kings and priests unto God” - and possibly to the Old Testament saints. To this, some agree and some do not. Some declare that only the Church will reign with Him. Others suggest that the Old Testament saints may be included.

“Judgment was given to them.” This is the fulfillment of **“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?”** (I Corinthians 6:2). These words are easily understood. No one need be confused here. The saints will sit with Jesus when He judges the world, and will judge with Him.

“ . . . And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God.” John sees, in the Spirit, souls - not persons, but souls of the martyrs. In Revelation 6:9-11 we read of the souls of the martyrs under the altar, crying out, asking how long God will permit the reign of the Antichrist . . . how long before their blood will be avenged. They are given white robes and palms, and instructed to wait a little season until their fellow servants should be killed. The souls John saw under the altar are the same souls he sees here, plus those who will be butchered during the reign of the Antichrist.

Notice the description the Spirit gives concerning these souls: **“Them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . for the Word of God . . . which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.”** These all lived and reigned with Christ one thousand years.

All of these were beheaded after the Rapture of the Church so we know that at least two groups will reign with Christ during the Millennium: The Bride and the martyrs described here. No doubt the majority of these will be butchered during the last three-and-a-half years of the Great Tribulation.

Note carefully that John first sees the souls, and in the same verse, **“they lived.”** The resurrection takes place immediately after the marriage supper of the Lamb, and just before the beginning of the Millennium.

Verse 5: **“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”**

The **“resurrection of the just”** is mentioned in Luke 14:13-14, and the **“resurrection of life”** is definitely distinguished from the **“resurrection unto damnation”** in John 5:29. Here in Revelation 20:5 we learn for the first time the interval that separates the two resurrections: One thousand years. When Jesus comes in the Rapture, only the righteous will be raised (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

When He comes in the end of the ages, only the wicked will be raised and will appear before the great white Throne to be judged. The doctrine of a general resurrection - a time when the good and bad, just and unjust are raised - is certainly disproved by, this text.

In John 5:28-29 we read, **“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”**

The **“hour”** referred to in this verse embraces one thousand years! Before the Millennium, the righteous will hear His voice. At the close of the Millennium the wicked will hear His voice. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. In John chapter 11 He called Lazarus by name. Had He simply said, **“Dead, come forth,”** every dead person would have come forth; but He called one man, and one man came out of the grave. When Jesus calls the righteous to meet Him in the air, only the righteous will be raised. Then one thousand years later the wicked will be raised.

I know some will disagree, but I ask you to honestly see this Bible fact. In John 5:25-27 we read, **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, THE HOUR IS COMING, AND NOW IS, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.”**

In verse 25, note **“the hour is coming, and now is.”** Please be reasonable and face the fact that the hour referred to in this verse is the day of Grace, and has already lasted more than 1900 years. The wording is, **“the hour is coming, and now is.”**

The dead referred to here are spiritually dead, not physically dead. All sinners are dead (Ephesians 2:1; John 5:24). When a dead sinner hears the voice of the Spirit and believes the Word, that dead sinner is raised to life, born of the Spirit, a new creation.

The hour referred to in John 5:25 has already lasted 1900 years. Why should it be difficult for anyone to believe that the hour in John 5:28 will last a thousand years? Regardless of what you believe, it is true, clearly taught in God’s Word.

Therefore, between the resurrection of those **“who have done good”** and the resurrection of those **“who have done evil,”** is a thousand years. **“The rest of the dead”** are the wicked referred to in Revelation 20:13. Not one saint of God will be raised in the last resurrection. The judgment at the great white Throne is final, eternal, and has to do with the wicked dead.

There is a resurrection of the just which is the first resurrection and consists of at least three distinct companies as concerning the time of their resurrection. This began with Christ, the first fruits (I Corinthians 15:23). **“Afterward, they that are Christ’s at His coming”** (the Rapture). (Read I Thessalonians 4:6).

Then on the eve of the introduction of the Millennial Kingdom we have the resurrection of the martyred saints of the Tribulation.

But with the wicked dead it is far different. All the wicked from Cain to the last person to live and die the death of a sinner will remain in their graves until after the Millennium, and then they will be raised. The resurrection of the wicked will be the last closing scene of the resurrection of the dead.

They will be judged, cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, then the eternal ages will begin with not one trace of wickedness on earth, in Heaven, or in any of God's new creations. All wickedness will be in the lake of fire.

In verse 6 we read, **“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”**

Certainly any thinking person could not miss the fact that only holy people will have part in the first resurrection. Only people who cannot be affected by the second death, only those who shall be priests of God and Christ will be raised in the first resurrection; and if there is no second resurrection, why would the Holy Spirit refer to **“the first resurrection?”**

Why did not the Spirit simply say “the resurrection in general?” The answer is clear. The Spirit leaves no untied ends. All is finished so that we may perfectly understand what the Word of God teaches.

In I Corinthians 15:51-54 we read of the resurrection of the body. This mortal will put on immortality, and the living will be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. The dead will be raised in glory, the bodies of the saints (whether alive or in the grave) will be changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body (Philippians 3:21; I John 3:1-3). Paul desired to have part in the first resurrection (Philippians 3:11), and the resurrection of the dead is taught in both the Old and New Testaments.

The salvation of the believer is complete now so far as the redemption of the soul is concerned. Jesus came the first time to redeem the soul; He is coming the second time to redeem the body, and no saint will receive a glorified, eternal body until the Rapture and the first resurrection.

The resurrection of the wicked is not a resurrection unto life, but unto eternal damnation. The righteous who share in the first resurrection are raised to receive glorified bodies in which they will live and rejoice forever. The wicked are raised to be cast into the lake of fire which is the second death. Christians do not die - the body rests in the dust, the spirit returns to God who gave it. The wicked, die forever. They die physically, and they, will die spiritually throughout eternity in the lake of fire. The righteous are raised to die no more - the wicked are raised to be cast into the lake of the **“second death”**! But the second death has no claim on those who are partakers of the first resurrection.

In verse 6 we learn . . . “but they shall be priests of God and of Christ.” Both the holy (I Peter 2:5) and those who possess the royal character of priesthood (I Peter 2:9) shall be in the first resurrection and shall reign with Christ in His kingdom for one thousand glorious years.

THE KINGDOM ON EARTH

Read these glorious words: **“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”** (Isaiah 11:6-9).

In these verses we have a description of something that seems unbelievable: A wolf and a lamb will dwell together, a leopard and a baby goat will feed together. A child will lead a lion, a bear and a cow will feed together, young bears and calves will lie down together. A lion will eat straw like an ox; a baby will play with a snake. There will be no killing, no destroying in God’s holy mountain. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord! Yes, this will literally happen right here on this earth. There are those who spiritualize it, but they are nothing short of spiritual thieves and robbers. God pity them when they stand before Him to receive their reward!

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:31-34).

This kingdom is certainly earthly, a visible kingdom on earth, the Millennial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will sit on the throne of His glory. There will be a government. God will rule in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ: **“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end”** (Luke 1:30-33).

In these verses there are seven **“shalls,”** four of which have been fulfilled. Mary brought forth a Son’ He was called Jesus; He was great; He was called the Son of the Highest. These have literally been fulfilled and why should not we believe that Jesus will sit on the throne of David and reign over the house of Jacob?

Daniel describes the event: **“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days (God Almighty), and they brought Him near before Him. and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”** (Daniel 7:13,14).

Jesus promised His disciples, **“In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”** (Matthew 19:28). The place of government will be in Jerusalem. The temple (the sanctuary) will be rebuilt in the New Jerusalem (Ezekiel 48:10, 20, 21). The new temple is described in Ezekiel 42:15-20.

The prophet Zechariah tells us, **“In that day (the Millennial day) living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea (Red Sea), half of them toward the hinder sea (Mediterranean): in the summer and in winter shall it be”** (Zechariah 14:8). Study carefully Ezekiel 47:8-12.

When Jesus returns in the Revelation (not in the Rapture) when every eye shall see Him (Revelation 1:5), He will come back to the Mount of Olives from which He ascended (Acts 1:9-12).

Zechariah describes exactly what will happen: **“And His feet (the feet of Christ) shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south . . . ALL THE LAND SHALL BE TURNED AS A PLAIN FROM GEBA TO RIMMON SOUTH OF JERUSALEM: AND IT SHALL BE LIFTED UP AND INHABITED”** (Zechariah 14:4, 10, 11).

When Jesus steps on the Mount of Olives, it will **“cleave in the midst.”** Some suggest that an earthquake will bring about the splitting of the mountain, but I do not agree; I believe that when the feet of Jesus touch the mountain it will split wide open. We read, **“Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under Him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place”** (Micah 1:3,4).

These great physical changes will make the land of Palestine level and make room for the New City and the glorious reign of the Lord God Almighty.

SATAN LOOSED FOR A LITTLE SEASON: DOOM OF GOG AND MAGOG; DOOM OF SATAN

7. **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,**
8. **And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**
9. **And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.**
10. **And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

In verse 7 we learn that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be set free for a season, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. His purpose in deceiving the nations is the same as it has always been.

- When he led some of the angels astray he desired to overthrow God.
- He suggested to Eve that God was unfair, knowing that if she ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she would be a little god.
- Satan demonstrated jealousy in the Garden of Eden.
- He accused God of being jealous, not wanting Adam and Eve to have knowledge, while all the time Satan himself was jealous of God!

At the close of the Millennium, Satan goes to the nations, deceives millions, **“the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”** Who would dare to estimate the grains of sand by the sea? This vast army will be made up of people born during the Millennium. Do not forget that Israel and the nations who befriended her will be in their natural bodies for one thousand years and there will be millions born during the Millennium who will never have known temptation because Satan will be in the pit throughout the one thousand years reign of Christ.

In verse 9 we learn that when Satan has deceived a great number as the sand of the sea, they march upon the breadth of the earth and completely circle the camp of the saints and the beloved city of Jerusalem. When the city is completely cut off from all outside help and completely compassed about with teeming millions of soldiers that make up Gog and Magog, when it seems that the case is hopeless and the Holy City will be wiped from the face of the earth, a tremendous miracle from Almighty God occurs: **“FIRE CAME DOWN FROM God OUT OF HEAVEN AND DEVoured THEM!”**

Again the Creator is greater than the created. Remember, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him”** (John 1:1,2). Satan was not created a devil; he was created **“the anointed cherub that covereth.”** He was perfect in wisdom, perfect in beauty, and perfect in all of his ways from the day he was created until iniquity was found in him (Ezekiel 28:14, 15).

Satan became the dragon, the deceiver, when he thought to overthrow God. God is the greater and finally annihilates the last great army to gather against the beloved city and the saints of God. It is true that **“the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me”** (Psalm 69:9), and any persecution directed at the saints of God is directed toward God. In this case, God fights the battle by simply sending fire down from Heaven and devouring the multimillions gathered in battle against the Holy City and the saints.

Who is Gog? Who is Magog? Study carefully Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. The reference in these chapters is to the fast growing power of Russia and Communism.

The true Russians descended from Japheth, a son of Noah (Genesis 10:2). The capital cities of Russia are named in the first verses of Ezekiel 38: **“Meshech”** is Moscow the capital of Russia, and **“Tubal”** is the city of Tobolsk: chief city of Siberia.

Referring to Gog and Magog, Ezekiel says, “**The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.**” The literal translation reads, “Prince of Rosh Meshech and Tubal” Thus, Russia is identified in Scripture as the land, the vast northern empire. Gog is the ruler, head of the great Russian empire. Ezekiel goes further to tell us of Persia, Ethiopia, and many other nations coming under the leadership of Gog, “**like a cloud to cover the land.**”

At that time the new State of Israel will be without walls, having neither bars nor gates; and it will seem that they will be an easy foe to conquer. Israel is becoming one of the wealthiest nations on earth, and according to Ezekiel 38:10-13 the great northern army will descend upon Israel to plunder and destroy. Gog will be the last czar of Russia.

When God sends fire down out of Heaven and devours the army around Jerusalem, there will not be one sinner left upon the face of the earth. Only Satan will be left, and God is about to deal with him. His doom was fixed in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:15, when God enlightened Lucifer that the seed of the woman would crush his head. He is the last of the evil powers to be destroyed. The Beast and the false prophet are already in the lake of fire, and now John sees in the Spirit what will literally take place: “**AND THE DEVIL THAT DECEIVED THEM WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHERE THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET ARE, AND SHALL BE TORMENTED DAY AND NIGHT FOR EVER AND EVER**” (Revelation 20:10).

The dragon was the first creature to sin, the first to be cast out of Heaven. Sin was born in the heart of Lucifer, “**the shining one.**” The Beast and the false prophet are already in the lake of fire; they were placed there at the beginning of the Millennium and are still there when the Millennium closes. After one thousand years of burning they are still burning . . . proof of the Lord’s words in Mark 9:49: “**Everyone shall be salted with fire.**”

Salt is a preservative. Here in the lake of fire are two men who have been “salted” with fire - not consumed, not burned up - but preserved IN torment, BY torment, TO BE tormented forever and ever throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Regardless of what you have heard, read, or been taught, hell is a place of literal fire, a place of wailing and gnashing of teeth. Hell is a place “**where the worm never dies,**” a place of unquenchable fire, a place of “**fire and brimstone.**” “**They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**”

They refers to the devil, the Beast, the false prophet, and all who have followed them. Day and night signifies that the torment is without intermission . . . continuous, unceasing. For ever and ever Signifies eternity . . . never ending existence.

Regardless of what some denominations teach, hell is a place of everlasting, unending punishment. I beg you, dear friend, if you are not born again, please prepare to meet God. Do not take a chance on waking up in hell in the lake of fire and brimstone!

The devil finally comes to the end of his deceiving, destroying, damning crusade which began in Heaven when he decided to overthrow God and take the throne.

Jesus said, **“I saw Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.”** Since that day, Satan has been the deceiver, the damner of the souls of men. One day he will be roasting in the lake of fire with the billions whom he led astray. He will be tormented day and night. He will beg for a drop of water to cool his tongue. He will wail and scream and gnash his teeth. God help you, dear reader, not to spend eternity in hell.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

Revelation 20:11-15:

- 11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.**
- 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**
- 13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.**
- 14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.**
- 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

“And I saw a great white throne . . .” In verse 12 we read, **“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.”**

There are two separate visions here:

First, John saw the throne and the Judge.

Second, he saw the dead and their judgment meted out.

At the beginning of the Millennium there was a great judgment poured out upon the living. Now at the close of the Millennium there is another great judgment, which is the judgment of the dead.

The throne set up in Matthew 25:31 is not the great white Throne of Revelation 20:11. The former was set up before the Millennium, and the parties judged there will be living persons on earth - the sheep and the goat nations. The great white Throne judgment is set up to reward all the wicked dead according to their wickedness. The judgment in Matthew 25:31 has to do with nations; the great white Throne judgment has to do with individuals.

We read in the Bible of three great thrones:

1. In Heaven (Revelation 4:2), from whence this universe is governed.
2. On earth (Matthew 25:31). The nations will be judged here in respect to their treatment of the preachers of the Kingdom as set forth in Matthew 25:40-45.
3. The great white Throne, where the wicked dead will be judged (Revelation 20:11).

This will be the greatest of all judgments. Many things contribute to make it so:

- The outstanding feature being that of the dignity of the Judge Himself.
- The greatness of the occasion,
- The vastness of the scene.

The eternal consequences involved are also contributing factors in making this a judgment such as has never been, nor ever will be again. The great white Throne judgment is like no other ever held.

“Him that sat on (the throne).” Notice that a pronoun is used here. The Judge is not named, but we have no difficulty discovering who He is: **“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son”** (John 5:22). The Judge is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The despised, hated, crucified Nazarene is now about to **“judge the quick and the dead”** (II Timothy 4:1).

The quick refers to the living He has already judged (Matthew 25:31). Here at the great white Throne He is about to judge the spiritually dead. Yes, the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ, sits on the great white Throne.

“ . . . From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them” Please notice, the earth and Heaven FLED - not disappeared or passed out of existence or were annihilated.

The rest of the verse guards against such unscriptural interpretation of the Word, plainly stating that there was found no place for them. Upon the removal of the earth and the Heaven, the stage is set for the new Heaven, the new earth and the Pearly white City. There will be a complete change of the Heaven and the earth. All things will be made new (Isaiah 66:22; II Peter 3:13).

Between the passing away of the Millennial earth and Heaven, and the appearing of the new earth and new Heaven (not the third Heaven where God’s house is, but the Heaven just above us where Satan’s throne is now located), the great white Throne is set up and the judgment of the wicked follows!

I am sure someone will ask what happens to the saved Israelites and Gentiles on the Millennial earth . . . the saints, the redeemed. Where are they during this change? God takes care of His own. The Scripture is completely silent here and we dare not speculate; but God can preserve the righteous nations and saints until the new earth, new Heaven and Pearly white City come into existence. The great white Throne judgment is final and will have to do with all the wicked up through the last ungodly person to exist on this earth, and there will never be another ungodly person to invade the new Heaven, earth and the Pearly white City.

Verse 12: **“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . . “**

The dead referred to here are the spiritually dead . . . unbelievers, ungodly men. There is a resurrection of the just - the first resurrection - which we have already discussed. We clearly saw that the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the wicked will not occur at the same time.

“ . . . **the small and the great** . . .” This statement occurs frequently in the Old Testament, and is found five times in Revelation: Chapters 11:18; 13:16; 19:5; 19:18 and 20:12.

“ . . . **STAND BEFORE GOD!**” Notice carefully - these people, small and great, rich and poor, wise and unwise, kings and peasants, are not standing on the earth; they are not standing on a cloud. They are standing before God Almighty, held in their position by His omnipotence! There is no place to hide . . . the mountains, caves and rocks are gone. The clouds, the atmosphere, the earth, have fled away. The guilty stand before God with no place to hide. They face God; there is no escape and no shelter. They must face Him who sits upon the throne!

In Revelation 4:1-4 John saw a throne, and around the throne he saw a rainbow . . . symbol of mercy.

- God placed the rainbow in the sky to assure Noah that the earth would never again be destroyed by water.
- Ezekiel also saw a bow in the sky.
- In Revelation 10:1 the Angel stands on the land and on the sea with a rainbow upon his head.
- In Revelation 4, when the believers are caught up to appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the rewards for things done in the body, there is a rainbow of mercy.

But here in Revelation 20:11, we see no rainbow. We see only the blazing white of God's righteousness, holiness and purity. There is no mercy. Mercy is forever gone for those who stand before God at the great white Throne!

Dear reader, will you meet God at the throne where there is a rainbow of mercy? or will you meet Him at the great white Throne?

You are the only person who knows the answer to that question. If you are born again, you will meet Him at the throne of mercy. If you are not born again, you will meet Him at the blazing white Throne of His holiness.

Verse 12 continues, “ . . . **and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written In the books, according to their works.**”

Every person on earth has his life and history recorded in the books of God's great bookkeeping system.

Every thought, word and deed is recorded. Nothing is forgotten; nothing is too small to be entered in the records of Almighty God. Only infants and idiots are excepted. If a child passes away before he reaches the age of accountability, or if the mind never develops beyond the mind of a child, God's grace takes care of the innocent.

But for all who know, and who pass into the age of accountability, every act is recorded in the books of Heaven.

Please note: Twice it is recorded that the judgment is “**according to their works.**”

Many ask, “If the righteous go to Paradise immediately at death, and if the wicked immediately drop into hell, then why the resurrection and the judgment?” The answer is clear to all who study and rightly divide the Word of truth: No person can receive his full reward until the consummation of all things.

The righteous die, the spirit returns to God who gave it, and rests . . . but “**their works do follow them**” (Revelation 14:13). Therefore, the righteous cannot receive their full reward until the last soul has received or rejected the Lord Jesus. Every person who contributes money, time, prayers, or whatsoever, to the winning of a soul, has a part in the reward for winning that soul.

The same is true concerning the wicked. Those who die in sin will be rewarded according to the extent of their wickedness. There are degrees of reward in Heaven and degrees of punishment in hell.

To whom much is given, of him much shall be required. They that know to do good, and yet do it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. They that know not, and commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. God is a just God, and you may rest assured that Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pilate, Herod and their kind will suffer a greater degree of punishment than will a teen-age boy who was reared in a bootlegger’s home and was never taught about Jesus Christ.

God will give justice to every mortal who has lived and died. The righteous will get exactly what they deserve . . . each individual will receive his or her reward - no more, no less. The same is true concerning the wicked. Each sinner will receive his or her reward according to the extent of his wickedness.

Please notice, “**books** (plural) **were opened.**”

These books record the deeds of the wicked . . . thought, word and deed. And then another book is opened - the Book of Life. The dead are not judged from the Book of Life, but are judged “**out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**” Read Luke 12:47,48; I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:10.

In verse 13 we read, “**The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.**”

By “**death**” we are to understand that the grave will give up the bodies; and, of course, the sea will give up the bodies that were buried at sea. By “**hell**” we understand that the compartment of the underworld (Hades) where the souls of the wicked dead will remain until the resurrection of the wicked, will deliver up the dead. Then both death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire.

Death and sin will not be found in the new earth.

Let me point out here that all wicked spirits drop into hell immediately at death. Hell (Hades), located in the center of this earth (Revelation 9:1 ff), is a prison to hold wicked spirits until the consummation of all things and the beginning of the eternity of eternities. At that time, hell itself will be cast into the lake of fire, which is the eternal abode of wicked spirits.

At the great white Throne the wicked will not be judged to see whether or not they are entitled to eternal life; that has already been settled. Here they will be judged to ascertain the degree of their punishment.

The fallen angels will be judged at the great white Throne. They are now **“reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day”** (Jude 6), when they, too, will be cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

In verse 13, death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire, and this is the second death. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 15:26 that death is the last enemy to be destroyed. Death itself will be cast into the lake of fire and there will be no death after the great white Throne judgment. None will die in Heaven or in earth.

“The second death” and **“the lake of fire”** are identical terms (Revelation 20:14). Both terms are used to describe the eternal state of the wicked. The second death is not annihilation of the soul. Revelation 19:20 compared with Revelation 20:10 proves this. After one thousand years in the lake of fire, the Beast and the false prophet are still burning, undestroyed! They burn forever and ever . . . through the ages of ages, throughout the unending eternity that lies ahead.

Verses 12 through 15 assure us that there will be no mistake at the judgment. The books are there, the Book of Life is there, the records are all there, and all will be judged according to the record. All who are not found in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire and tormented forever and ever. There will be no back-talk at the judgment; the record will speak. Paul said, **“Let God be true, but every man a liar”** (Romans 3:4).

God’s record cannot lie. He knows every minute detail of our lives, and those details are on record. The only way to keep them from being brought out in the judgment is to have them covered by the precious blood of the Lamb. Are your sins covered by the Blood, dear reader?

If not, God grant this be the happy moment when you bow your head and surrender wholeheartedly and unreservedly to the Lamb of God. God grant that not one person who reads these lines will stand at the great white Throne judgment! May you be washed white in the precious Blood of Jesus, and be in that number when the Bride is caught up to meet Jesus in the air.

~ end of chapter 20 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
